

IN THE CLAIMS

The text of all claims under examination is submitted, and the status of each is identified. This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

1. (original): A process of dewatering an aqueous suspension comprising treating the suspension with a dewatering amount of a reverse phase polymer, and subjecting the suspension to a mechanical dewatering to form a cake,
characterised in that the reverse phase polymer only partially inverts to bring about flocculation and thickening of the suspension, and then fully inverts during further dewatering to form a cake.
2. (original): A process according to claim 1 in which the reverse phase polymer is the sole chemical dewatering treatment aid.
3. (currently amended): A process according to claim 1 ~~or claim 2~~ in which the aqueous suspension is sewage sludge.
4. (currently amended): A process according to ~~any of claims~~ claim 1 to 3 in which the mechanical dewatering employs an apparatus selected from the group consisting of belt press, filter press, screw press and centrifuge.
5. (currently amended): A process according to ~~any of claims~~ claim 1 to 4 in which the reverse phase polymer is a water in oil emulsion or a substantially dehydrated polymer in oil dispersion.
6. (currently amended): A process according to ~~any of claims~~ claim 1 to 5 in which the polymer is cationic.
7. (currently amended): A process according to ~~any of claims~~ claim 1 to 6 in which the polymer is formed from at least 30 % by weight cationic monomer or monomers.
8. (currently amended): A process according to ~~any of claims~~ claim 1 to 7 in which the polymer is selected from the group consisting of cationic polyacrylamides, polymers of dialkyl diallyl ammonium chloride, dialkyl amino alkyl (meth) -acrylates (or salts thereof) and dialkyl amino alkyl (meth)-acrylamides (or salts thereof).

9. (currently amended): A process according to ~~any of claims~~ claim 1 to 8 in which the polymer has an intrinsic viscosity of at least 0.5 dl/g, ~~preferably 4 to 10 dl/g~~.

10. (currently amended): A process according to ~~any of claims~~ claim 1 to 9 in which the polymer is selected from the group consisting of,

i) a polymer formed from 50 to 100% by weight methyl chloride quaternary ammonium salt of dimethyl amino ethyl (meth) acrylate and 0 to 20% by weight acrylamide of intrinsic viscosity between 4 and 10 dl/g,

ii) polyvinyl amidine and polyvinyl amines of intrinsic viscosity greater than 1 dl/g,

iii) quaternised salts of Mannich addition polyacrylamides of intrinsic viscosity greater than 1 dl/g, and

iv) poly dimethyl diallyl ammonium chloride of intrinsic viscosity greater than 0.5 dl/g.

11. (new): A process according to claim 1 in which the polymer has an intrinsic viscosity of at least 4 to 10 dl/g.